

**April 15, 1957**

**Record of Conversation between Polish Premier J.  
Cyrankiewicz and Chinese Leader Mao Zedong, 8  
April 1957**

**Citation:**

"Record of Conversation between Polish Premier J. Cyrankiewicz and Chinese Leader Mao Zedong, 8 April 1957", April 15, 1957, Wilson Center Digital Archive, AAN, KC PZPR, sygnatura XI A 130, Dept. V China 074/13/58. Obtained by Douglas Selvage and translated by Malgorzata Gnoinska.

<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/117353>

**Summary:**

Mao Zedong and Cyrankiewicz discuss industrial planning, international economic cooperation, and the economic situation in each of their respective countries.

**Credits:**

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

**Original Language:**

Polish

**Contents:**

Translation - English

Warsaw 4.15.1957

People's Republic of Poland  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Secretariat [of]  
I Secretary of the CC PUWP  
Cde. Wl. Gomulka.

Local

Upon the instruction of Comrade Minister Rapacki, the Secretariat is sending [you] the minutes of the conversation with Comrade Mao Zedong along with the attachment which was brought back according to the cable by Comrade Katz-Suchy.

Secretariat  
Signature  
/W. Lewandowska/

Minutes of the Conversation carried out by the Leader of the Polish Governmental Delegation in China, the PPR Premier J. Cyrankiewicz, with the Leader of the PRC, Mao Zedong, on 4.8.1957 in the Headquarters of Mao Zedong.

First, Premier Cyrankiewicz passed on greetings for Cde. Mao Zedong from the First Secretary of the CC PUWP, Cde. Gomulka, and he passed on a letter from the President of the Council of State, Cde. Zawadzki. At the same time, Premier Cyrankiewicz added that Poland was grateful for the invitation of the Governmental Delegation of the PPR. In reply Chairman Mao Zedong welcomed the delegation fullheartedly and asked about the impression of Canton [Guangzhou].

PREMIER CYRANKIEWICZ: We were one day in Canton. A meeting with Cde. Liu Shaoqi [one of the managerial figures of the People's [Republic] of China, the Vice Chairman of the PRC, the Chairman of the Standing Committee of the Assembly of People's Representatives, the Secretary General of the CCP] took place. Most of us are in China for the first time; it is a great experience for us.

MAO ZEDONG: This is [your] first trip in the East. CYRANKIEWICZ: When it comes to China, the leading figures of the Polish People's [Republic] already had the opportunity to speak with Cdes. Zhou Enlai [and] Ho Lung. Once again, I thank [you] for the invitation. We are grateful to Cde. Mao Zedong for [his] interest in Poland [and] for the demonstrated assistance in a difficult situation. Thanks to this we can build socialism better after the VIII Plenum, even though we still have difficulties. The aim of the transformation, carried out in Poland, is to fight what was bad. We have cleansed the moral atmosphere of our construction of socialism, with our relations with other socialist countries, and with the USSR. [The issue of] the ties between the party and the masses was brought before the VIII Plenum. We fixed this, thanks to which we can build socialism better. In the course of the VIII Plenum, our leadership, headed by Cde. Gomulka, felt gratitude for the understanding demonstrated by Cede. Mao Zedong and other members of the leadership of the Party and the Chinese nation. The assistance in [our] construction of socialism was demonstrated in this way; this has [an] influence on the unity of socialist countries.

MAO ZEDONG: We are members of one socialist family. We want everything to be well in every socialist country and in our socialist family. The party and the Chinese nation show concern for Polish matters.

Last year there was no such understanding within the international socialist movement for the Polish matter and for the work of the Polish comrades as [there is] now. Some comrades were faced with the issue of whether Poland is advancing on the road to socialism. This is a crucial issue. Some were interested in Poland's attitude towards the USSR [and] to other socialist countries. The best argument for any doubts is time. After a short while, it was understood what was going on in Poland. Now this issue does not exist anymore.

I read the Polish French statement; it is very good. It makes a positive impact on the international communist movement. We discussed the Polish matter with the Czechoslovak delegation. Cde. Shiroki, while in China, said that he believed that Poland was following the course.

Perhaps there are still a certain number of comrades who have doubts as to the direction of development of Poland. I think that if one of the countries does not understand the Polish issues, there is nothing frightening about this. I think that the best method is a patient explanation. Poland should explain its own way.

Each of the socialist countries has difficulties; China has them too. In principle, the situation in China is good, but there are matters to be solved. We have much to do in the area of ties with the masses. Bureaucratism and sectarianism are a nuisance. We are conducting work among the members of the party in order to strengthen its ties with the masses. We also have large economic difficulties. There is a backwardness in this area. One has to work a lot in order to transform life. Changes for the better do not come at once. What economic difficulties does Poland sense?

CYRANKIEWICZ: Poland is undergoing economic difficulties. We made much progress as far as the Six Year

Plan, which was a plan to industrialize the country. But the disproportion between industry and agriculture arose. We did not carry out the plan of raising the standard of living, which caused discontent [displeasure] among the masses. Many errors were made in agriculture. We are currently fixing these mistakes. We paid more attention to agriculture. We are allocating more funds to them, which we are getting, among other things, through decreasing investments in industry.

Distortions of democracy took place inside the party. Law and order were violated.

We began to bring back the Leninist norms; to bring back the Party's ties with the masses.

Serious increases in wages took place already last year as well as this year, but this is not efficient in comparison to the needs of the masses. We are telling them that we cannot carry out further increases, because we will be threatened by inflation. We are on the verge of financing pay increases with [the profits from] the amount of goods. The agricultural production decides, to a great extent, the amount of goods, and therefore we want to increase it. A preliminary program of eliminating disproportion between industry and agriculture was put forward in 1954, but the decisive turn occurred only after the VIII Plenum.

MAO ZEDONG: How does the carrying out of the Six Year Plan presents itself in Poland?

CYRANKIEWICZ: The plan has been pretty much carried out in industry, but it varies in different branches of industry- what also goes into it is the burden of military production in the global production; we didn't carry it [the plan] out in agriculture; it was unrealistic. It assumed that in the course of 6 years one could increase the production by 40%. This assumption was not based on realistic premises. In addition,

we made a series of mistakes which additionally contributed to the fact that we did not achieve what we could have in agriculture. We have not been delivering investment and construction materials [or] a sufficient amount of fertilizers; we demobilized part of the peasants [who were involved] in production by creating conditions of an uncertain tomorrow.

MAO ZEDONG: China is making use of your positive and negative experiences. Planning in China is still of an experimental nature. The future will show the prospects of planning. We are making fewer mistakes while making use of your experience. Every country is taking a zigzag path to socialism. China also has serious problems in agriculture. The level of production is low. We have difficulties in the countryside. China is a peasant country. Our peasants want to eat and clothe themselves. We have difficulties with supplying the cities. Does this also occur on your side? I know that half of the population in Poland are peasants.

CYRANKIEWICZ: Yes. The difficulties in our agriculture result partially from the fact that many peasants moved to the city, to industry, and that is why there is a lack of labor [lit: hands to work] here and there in the countryside. The working class has increased numerically. Besides, we have a large population increase - half a million annually. Our agriculture does not yet satisfy the needs of the country. We are importing around 1.5 million tons of grain annually. This is a significant import. Our import is significantly targeted at accelerating the development of animal farming.

MAO ZEDONG: How does your export look like?

CYRANKIEWICZ: We export coal, metallurgic products, machines, textiles (the latter to the USSR where we are procuring cotton), and entire industrial complexes. Machines and entire industrial complexes are our new exports. It takes place primarily to the countries of Asia, among others, to China.

MAO ZEDONG: How about economic relations with the countries of Africa?

CYRANKIEWICZ: We are trying to develop them. We have relations with Egypt, with Tunisia, and other Arab countries. We help Egypt and Arab nations with armament. We have a large armament industry. We don't know what to do with it.

MAO ZEDONG: China also has an overly developed armament industry. Do you want to reduce the armament industry?

CYRANKIEWICZ: Yes. Some of the armament facilities are working in low gear. Some are providing accessory production for the needs of the people.

MAO ZEDONG: One should have some armament, but not too much.

CYRANKIEWICZ: Yes, the Polish people understand this. But, one shouldn't have too much [of it]; we built too large an armament industry and there should be cooperation among socialist countries in this area, so we are not all producing the same thing.

MAO ZEDONG: How does economic coordination look in general between socialist countries?

CYRANKIEWICZ: It's looking better [lit: it's getting on a better track]. We brought up certain motions to the Council for Economic Mutual Assistance and the Soviet Union which resulted from previous bad experiences. There was no division of production,

but the allocation of tasks [took place], at times, even without asking individual countries. Some tasks were imposed, especially concerning our coal. During our visit in Moscow in 1956, we brought up, along with Cde. Ochab, the matter of correct cooperation. The matter looks better today, but there is still a lack of a positive conception. We want the cooperation to take place on the principle of equality [among] the partners. The matter is looking better.

MAO ZEDONG: How [should we] understand the principle. of equality in cooperation?

CYRANKIEWICZ: It should take place according to the consent of respective countries.

MAO ZEDONG: Is it better now?

CYRANKIEWICZ: Better, but there is still a lack of a positive conception.

MAO ZEDONG: I know that there is also a deficiency of grain and consumer goods in the countries of Eastern Europe; however, there are too many machines.

CYRANKIEWICZ: Yes, Czechoslovakia and the GDR are importing grain. Both of these countries have a developed machine industry. They also have a large production of industrial consumer goods. That is why the standard of living in both of these countries is higher than in ours. Numerically, roughly speaking, one can say that it is twice as high.

MAO ZEDONG: And what does the standard of living look like in these two countries in comparison with that of the USSR?

CYRANKIEWICZ: It is also higher.

MAO ZEDONG: And what does standard of living of the USSR looks like in comparison with Poland?

CYRANKIEWICZ: The goods of industrial consumption are cheaper in the USSR. However, the consumption of meat, butter, in general fats, is higher in Poland. But our consumption in this area is lower than in Western Europe, the GDR, the CSSR [Czechoslovak Republic], and in Hungary.

MAO ZEDONG: The consumption is even lower in China. China cannot be compared with any European country. One can only compare with the level before the war in China. It is currently a little better than before the liberation, but not significantly. The average annual consumption of meat (pork) amounts to 5 kilos per head; grain about 300 kg.

CYRANKIEWICZ: On our end, they compare with the neighboring countries; the comparisons are not advantageous. In comparison with the prewar level, with the overall increase in population growth and consumption, some categories earn less.

MAO ZEDONG: That's true. Those countries are near. One cannot prohibit comparisons. Propaganda should show, however, a systematic increase year by year.

CYRANKIEWICZ: The socialist countries should demonstrate economic superiority, among others, by raising the standard of living. In our propaganda, we are showing our masses that Western countries grew rich on colonial exploitation and were

developing during the period when we were under occupation. Some categories of our workers earn less than before the war. It causes dissatisfaction. Another source of discontent is that we promised more than we could give. People do not want to be cheated. Today we are saying that the improvement of living conditions depends on the working class and the people.

MAO ZEDONG: This is correct. We know that Cde. Gomulka and other comrades from the leadership emphasize in their pronouncements that raising the standard of living depends on the efforts of the working masses. Do all workers understand this?

CYRANKIEWICZ: Now better than before because we are telling them even the bitter truth. The party must be strong in order to have a bond with the working class. The current efforts are aimed in the direction of an ideological strengthening of the Party.

MAO ZEDONG: This is necessary. We are currently working on this as well. It is necessary to strengthen the political work and the ideological leadership among the workers, peasants and the academic youth.

CYRANKIEWICZ: Before we did not use this to convince, but we gave orders. This is a big task of the Party.

MAO ZEDONG: One has to know how to talk to the masses. Some don't know how to do this. They know how to give orders. There is a lack of conviction in their pronouncements. Our party is strengthening the work in this area. We have to treat the nation differently, [we have to treat] differently the class enemy. It is easy to violate the border here. The Party seasoned itself in the class struggle. That is why it has experience in fighting the class enemy. Some, if they only find divergences in the bosom of the nation, accuse for enmity instead of convincing that they are using a method of administrative pressure. We have to differentiate these two kinds of divergences with total clarity. The classicists talked little about these two kinds of divergences. Force must be used against the enemy. As for the nation, a method of clever persuasion must be used.

CYRANKIEWICZ: The distinguishing of these divergences is very important for the construction of socialism.

MAO ZEDONG: In China, numbering hundreds of millions of people, these divergences must be solved especially carefully.

CYRANKIEWICZ: The example of China in this area, the activity and the work of Cde. Mao Zedong, means a lot to us.

MAO ZEDONG: One has to beware, however, of an automatic transfer of experiences.

CYRANKIEWICZ: Yes. But, on the other hand there is much convergence of the development of socialism in individual countries. In Poland, last year, if we were to use your nomenclature, serious divergences appeared in the bosom of the nation, and even in the Party. A critique of the previous state [of affairs] took place; [people] began to look for new ways. But we approached this correctly. We solved our problems on our own. These divergences became solved at the VIII Plenum. Otherwise, the class enemy could exploit this. If the Party did not solve these divergences on its own, then it would leave a base for counterrevolutionary activity. It seems that the situation in Hungary was similar in the beginning. But in Hungary the Party, through the lips of "Geröz", defined the dissatisfaction of the working class as the activity of the enemy. Thus, in Hungary, the situation looked the opposite of Poland in the area of conclusions. As a result, the Party did not follow the process of

restoration. The class enemy exploited this. This has given a wide field for counter revolutionary activity.

MAO ZEDONG: In Poland, the Party was following the process of restoration. The situation in Hungary looked different. The Petöfi Club existed in Hungary. It unleashed an unhealthy campaign. The Party and the Central Committee were passive during that period; it was different in Poland. There were two trends in the Hungarian Party. The people revolted. Nagy represented revisionism and he was tied to the Club of Petöfi. The majority of the Party led the process in Poland. The leadership forces in Poland and Hungary were different. In Hungary, at a certain time, the masses rebelled. The Party and the Government ceased to exist. The Party was not able to lead the process of restoration. A base was formed for the activity of the counterrevolution and revisionism.

CYRANKIEWICZ: If one does not follow the process of restoration, one goes astray, because who is to lead if not the Party?

MAO ZEDONG: The Party led in Poland. The restoration was set as a goal. In Hungary, the goal of the Petöfi Club was to break up the Party and the government. (A very detailed conversation on this topic took place during yet two dinners).

CYRANKIEWICZ: On our end, the goal was improving the construction of socialism, the stabilization of our relations with the USSR as was dictated by our national dignity.

MAO ZEDONG: Shiroki agreed that Poland was on the right path. I spoke with him. One has to explain to other fraternal countries and parties in order for them to understand what the crux of the matter was.

CYRANKIEWICZ: We have been doing this and we will continue to do so. The talks between our Party and the English Party took place recently. [Our] governmental visit will take place in Czechoslovakia in May, and in the GDR in June.

MAO ZEDONG: This is very good. This will give further opportunity to exchange views. If there are differences in the views, then it doesn't matter. One has to leave the matter up to time. There is no need, however, to drag out the matter outside. To an article, for example, immediately answer with an article.

CYRANKIEWICZ: We also think so. We criticized the pro nouncements of [Yugoslav leader Josip Broz] Tito in Pula. We told the Yugoslav comrades about this.

MAO ZEDONG: The pronouncements of Tito [and] Kardelj do not have support.

CYRANKIEWICZ: I would like to bring up yet another mat ter. The Party, the Government, the Polish people warmly invite Cde. Mao Zedong to Poland.

MAO ZEDONG: Thank you. I have received the invitation. CYRANKIEWICZ: We invited [you] in November of last

Year. We believe that you will accept the invitation. Your visit in Poland will be a momentous event for the Polish nation.

MAO ZEDONG: In principle, the visit has been agreed upon. All is left is setting the date.

Prepared by:

/E. Sluczanski/ Shanghai, 12 April 1957□